I’d long wanted to pursue a career in midwifery as a result of positive and influential experiences in midwifery placements as a nursing student. Once I made the change, I was genuinely welcomed and encouraged by the women, their families and our midwifery colleagues. At every stage of the clinical program I felt supported and nurtured by these colleagues to acquire the skills, language and confidence to work in true partnership with women and their families. It has been such a rewarding and fulfilling career move.’

POSTGRADUATE MIDWIFERY STUDENT
Welcome

A warm welcome to the 2020 edition of the Midwifery Application for Recruitment and Training (MidStart) handbook. The NSW public health system is committed to the training and development of midwives and we are delighted that you are considering midwifery as a career. NSW Health’s Nursing and Midwifery Office co-ordinates the statewide centralised application process for registered nurses wishing to undertake postgraduate studies in midwifery in a NSW public hospital. This is known as the MidStart program.

This Handbook has been designed to assist you in preparing and applying for a midwifery student position within a maternity service in a NSW public hospital whilst undertaking concurrent studies in midwifery at university. Recruitment is a competitive process and it is important to ensure that you submit the best application possible to optimise your chance of success. In regard to your choices about potential locations for employment, my best advice is to keep your mind open to the many options and locations available to you for your midwifery training.

Midwifery is an outstanding career, and provides the opportunity to be part of something wonderful with the ability to make a difference to the lives of women and their families. I’d like to take this opportunity to wish you well as you embark on this new stage in your career.
# 2020 MidStart

## Key Recruitment Dates

<table>
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| **APRIL – MAY 2019** | > Information about the 2020 application recruitment process on the NSW Health MidStart website including university and employer weblinks  
> Research hospitals with student midwife positions available  
> Investigate the three Universities (CSU, UTS, WSU) providing postgraduate midwifery studies in NSW and check their course application dates |
| **JUNE 2019**      | > 2020 MidStart Applications open: **Friday 7 June 2019**  
> 2020 MidStart Applications close: **Thursday 20 June 2019** |
| **JULY 2019**      | > Between **11-19 July 2019**: Interviews conducted for eligible applicants |
| **AUGUST 2019**    | > On **Monday 26 August 2019**: MidStart recruitment outcome emailed to applicants |
| **SEPTEMBER 2019** | > By **Monday 2nd September 2019**: Successful applicants accept or decline offers  
> On **Monday 9th September 2019**: The Eligible Applicants’ Bank opens to employers  
> On **Friday 27 September 2019**: Employment contracts sent to successful applicants |
Considering a career in Midwifery

What is a midwife?

A midwife is recognised as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with women to give the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife’s own responsibility and to provide care to the newborn and the infant. This care includes preventative measures, the promotion of normal birth, the detection of complications in mother and child, the accessing of medical care or other appropriate assistance and the carrying out of emergency measures. The midwife has an important task in health counselling and education, not only for the woman, but also within the family and community. This work should involve antenatal education and preparation for parenthood and may extend to women’s health, sexual or reproductive health and child care. A midwife may practise in any setting including home, community, hospitals, clinics or health units. International Confederation of Midwives (ICM).

The professional experience requirements for a midwife include gaining capability providing continuity of care experiences for women. Continuity of midwifery care means that a woman develops a partnership with a midwife to receive care during pregnancy, labour and the postnatal period.

How to become a Midwife

There are two pathways to becoming a registered midwife. If you are already a Registered Nurse (Division 1) with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) you can undertake postgraduate studies in midwifery. In NSW Health, the MidStart program is the way to access this pathway. The other pathway is through the completion of a Bachelor of Midwifery degree.
The MidStart program requires registered nurses to be enrolled in a recognised postgraduate university course at one of three NSW universities while being concurrently employed in a recognised student midwifery position in a NSW public maternity service. The MidStart program varies between 12 and 18 months in length.

The salary you will be paid as a postgraduate midwifery student (once verification has occurred) will reflect your years of service as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) in accordance with the NSW Public Health System Nurses’ and Midwives’ (State) Award 2019.

On entry to practice, a midwife is a person who: has successfully completed a midwifery education program that is duly recognised in the country where it is located and that is based on the International Confederation Midwives (ICM) Essential Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice and the framework of the ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Education; who has acquired the requisite qualifications to be registered and/or legally licensed to practise midwifery and use the title ‘midwife’; and who demonstrates competency in the practice of midwifery.
A ‘typical’ week for a MidStart student

The combination of work and study requires you to give some consideration to how you can achieve a work-life balance. A useful strategy is to explore the support that your family/close friends can provide during your year as a midwifery student. You will also experience the expert-to-novice readjustments as a result of being a student again.

As a student you will be required to provide continuity of care experiences which will involve establishing, maintaining and concluding a professional relationship with a number of women through their pregnancy, labour and birth, and the postnatal period. Time spent providing continuity of care will, from time to time, be on top of your contracted hours of employment.

Your week will include:

✔ Allocating time for study, research and completion of university assignments
✔ Attending university – either one day a week or at residential school. You will need to confirm this with your chosen university
✔ Attending in-services provided for midwifery students within your training hospital
✔ Working closely with registered midwives and registered nurses in the development of midwifery skills
✔ Using your diary to ensure that you have allocated time for your CoC experiences
✔ Negotiating with the Midwifery Unit Manager where you will be working to ensure that you are able to be at the births of the women you have recruited for your CoC experiences
✔ Travel related to attending antenatal visits, births and postnatal care of your CoC women

‘to achieve a balance between study, work and life I found having a diary and planning shifts and assignments, scheduling in activities I enjoy on days off … exercising and getting enough sleep all helped.’

JC – POSTGRADUATE MIDWIFERY STUDENT
Prepating to apply

Recruitment Requirements

There are a number of recruitment requirements to consider before applying to MidStart including eligibility and selection criteria, identification of suitable referees, researching where you wish to undertake your training and study, and employment screening.

Am I eligible?

To be eligible to apply for MidStart you must:

✔ Be an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident. (New Zealand citizens residing in Australia who hold a current Special Category Visa are considered to have permanent residency status)

✔ Hold current registration as a Registered Nurse (Division 1) with the NMBA at the time of application.

Choosing your preferred training hospital and university

It is important that you give some time to considering the hospital/s where you wish to apply for a midwifery student position, as well as where you would like to undertake your university studies.

Applicants have the opportunity to enter up to 6 preferred hospital sites to undertake their training in their online application.

Some Local Health Districts/hospitals may have memorandums of understanding and partnerships with specific universities so that students studying at a particular university may only be able to undertake midwifery training at linked hospitals.

It’s important to confirm this with both the universities and the hospitals prior to determining your hospital preferences for your application.
The process of contacting and applying for a university placement to study midwifery is your responsibility and is completely separate to the MidStart process.

The three universities that offer post graduate courses in midwifery in NSW are:

**Charles Sturt University**

**University of Technology Sydney**

**Western Sydney University**

Mid-year intakes are only offered at a limited number of hospitals and at only one NSW university, so it is important that you consider this when researching your options.

Training in rural hospitals may include periods of rotation to larger facilities to ensure you gain the required clinical experience. As you will be required to complete CoC experiences as well as your rostered shifts the distance required to travel to your preferred hospital is also something for you to consider.

**Please note:** Some positions may require a valid driver’s licence (eg: rural and community).

If your chosen university requires you to attend an intensive theoretical program at the commencement of your midwifery training, this does not form part of your employment contract.

Selection Criteria

As part of your application you will be asked to **address each of the six (6) Selection Criteria** demonstrating your ability to meet each one (**up to a maximum of 150 words per criterion**). Your responses will be considered as part of your overall application. The online application is time-limited (about 60 minutes) therefore it is recommend you prepare your responses in a word document then copy and paste these into the online application.

The Selection Criteria are:

1. Understanding the role of the midwife within a primary healthcare framework
2. Demonstrated understanding and commitment to the requirements of the training program including continuity of care experience
3. Demonstrated effective clinical communication through the use of information technology, written, verbal means and sound interpersonal skills with the capacity to interact with others in a personable and professional manner
4. Demonstrated ability in clinical problem solving
5. Demonstrated understanding of collaboration across an interdisciplinary team and to work within NSW Health CORE Values – Collaboration, Openness, Respect and Empowerment
6. Understanding of Work Health & Safety, infection control and quality improvement principles

Employment Screening

To be considered for a position in a NSW public health facility applicants must undergo a series of employment screening checks including:

- **Referee checks** – applicants must include the names and contact details of **two nominated clinical referees, of which one referee must be your current or most recent manager**.

- **Evidence of current immunisation** status (refer to NSW Health policy PD2018_009)

The Application and Recruitment Process

How do I apply?

Applications for the 2020 MidStart program will:

✔️ Open at **10am on Friday 7 June 2019** and
✔️ Close at **10am on Thursday 20 June 2019**

Late applications will **not** be accepted.

Apply for a new graduate position in the NSW Health 2020 MidStart program at: https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/employment/Pages/midstart.aspx and click on the Apply Now button.

Before you apply please note the following:

If you are a current employee of NSW Health, you must then log in using your Stafflink ID before you click on the Apply now Now button within the job advertisement.

If you are not an employee of NSW Health, you should click on the Apply Now button in the job advertisement. You will then be asked to select “New User” or enter “Returning user” to register in the system.

Key Points to consider:

1. Recruitment is a competitive process, and in some services there are many more applications than available student midwife positions. In order to increase the likelihood of a successful application, it is suggested that you **be flexible** in your options when determining your **preferred training positions**. You have the opportunity to enter up to six hospitals in order of preference in your online application.

2. **Attention to detail is important**: Ensure you enter your details correctly in the online application.
3. You will need a **valid email address** as this is the primary way employers will contact you through the recruitment process. Please Note: Hotmail and Live.com.au addresses can be blocked by some employers so it is strongly recommended you consider an alternative to these. If an employer is unable to contact you due to incorrect email details or telephone numbers, you may be withdrawn from the recruitment process.

4. Have your **selection criteria responses** and **referee contact details** ready prior to commencing your online application. There is a limited time to complete the online application (about 60 minutes) so to maximise your time, copy and paste your selection criteria responses from your Word document. Each selection criteria has a maximum 150 word limit.

Following the submission of your application, you will receive an email confirmation of your completed application.

You have the opportunity to edit your online application after submission as many times as you like until applications close at **on Thursday 20 June 2019**. Once applications close, you will no longer have access to your application. Should you need to change personal data in your application such as contact information or referee details after applications close, you can do so by contacting HealthShare customer service desk on 1300 679 367 (Option 9)

Please remember the process of contacting and/or **applying for a university placement** to study midwifery is **your responsibility** and is **completely separate to the MidStart process**. You **cannot be employed** as a postgraduate midwifery student if you are **not enrolled** in an appropriate university programme.

**The Interview and Selection Process**

Applicants will be invited to attend a face to face interview by the hospital/Local Health District that you nominate as your first preference training facility. **Interviews** will be held statewide **between Thursday 11 July and Friday 19 July 2019**. Specific times and dates will vary between hospitals. It is important you make yourself available to attend the interview as telephone/skype interviews will only be held at the discretion of the interviewing facility.
The interview invitation email will detail a list of documents you will need to bring with you to interview, such as evidence of your current registration as a registered nurse identification and residency documentation, a driver’s licence. The required documents form part of recruitment standards for employers. If you are unable to provide these at the requested time, you may not be invited to proceed to interview.

Applicants can download the relevant policies from the NSW Health website: https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/Pages/default.aspx.

You will receive a separate email titled pre-employment. Please click on the link within the email to complete this information.

**Recruitment Outcomes**

Positions will be allocated on a merit basis where the best applicant is selected following a competitive process. Applicants will be advised of their recruitment outcome by email on Monday 26 August 2019. You will be advised of one of the following outcomes:

1. You are **successful** and have been offered a position at a particular hospital
2. You have been placed on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank for allocation if positions become available
3. You are **not successful** in this recruitment process (Please note: you may still be eligible to apply in the following years)

If you are successful, you will receive a second email on 27th August 2019 from the recruitment system containing the weblink for you to accept your position. You will need to accept your position on line by the 2nd September 2019 or your offer will be withdrawn.

Once you submit your acceptance of the position, a screen confirmation will appear. You need to save and/or print this screen confirmation as you will need to provide this confirmation of position offer to the program coordinator at your preferred university.
The University Program Coordinators are:

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<tr>
<th>CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY</th>
<th>UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY</th>
<th>WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY</th>
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<td><a href="mailto:l.luck@westernsydney.edu.au">l.luck@westernsydney.edu.au</a></td>
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Please note: It is YOUR responsibility to notify your preferred university that you have been successful in gaining a midwifery student position. You must inform your preferred university of your intention to study there as well as the location of your midwifery student position.

### Eligible Applicants’ Bank

For those applicants who are placed on the Eligible Applicant’s Bank – this means that you are deemed eligible for employment but are not allocated a position because of the limited number of positions available in your preference list at the time of first offers. The Eligible Applicants’ Bank is open to employers to fill vacant positions from **Monday 9 September 2019**. This may be due to other applicants declining position offers or withdrawing from the MidStart recruitment process. The Eligible Applicants’ Bank remains open until 31 May 2020 or until all positions are filled, whichever occurs first.

### Seeking Feedback

If you are placed on the Eligible Applicants’ Bank or made unsuccessful in this recruitment process you are encouraged to seek feedback from the contact person provided in your interview outcome letter.
Find out more at

Email MOH-Midwifery@health.nsw.gov.au